REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the title, objected to the drawings and rejected claims 1-19 and 41-54 under 35 USC § 102(e). These objections and rejections are fully traversed below.

Claims 1-19 and 41-54 remain pending in the application. Claims 18 and 41 have been amended to clarify the subject matter regarded as the invention. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested based on the following remarks.

OBJECTION TO THE SPECIFICATION

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the title of the invention as not being descriptive. Although it is submitted that the original title is sufficiently descriptive, Applicant has amended the title of the invention to "METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR CONTROLLED DISTRIBUTION OF CONTACT INFORMATION OVER A NETWORK." Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw the objection to the title of the invention.

OBJECTION TO THE DRAWINGS

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that the informal drawings filed with the application were acceptable for examination purposes, and that formal drawings would be required when the application is allowed. However, on the Office Action Summary, the drawings appear to be objected to by the Examiner. The Office Action Summary also indicates that a Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review is attached; however, no such notice was attached to the Office Action received by the Applicant. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner clarify whether the drawings are objected to at this time and to also provide Applicant with the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-19 AND 41-54 UNDER 35 USC §102(e)

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-18 and 41-54 under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Nielsen, U.S. Patent No. 5,948,054; and rejected claim 19 under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Baker et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,678,041. These rejections are fully traversed below.

Nielsen describes a network computer system in which a customer can ask an information request (including a question) to a server. The server determines which of one or more consultants is qualified to provide an answer to the question. The server then solicits answers from the one or more qualified consultants. The one or more answers provided by the consultants can then be sent to the customer. "In this manner, the server matches the human customer with the question with a human consultant with the answer. By doing so, the server enables the customer to obtain an answer to his question without knowing up front which consultant has sufficient knowledge to provide the answer." See Abstract.

The exchange of information between human customers and human consultants as described in Nielsen is dramatically different from the claimed invention of the present application. Certain distinctions of the claimed invention with respect to Nielsen are explained below.

Claim 1 pertains to a computer-implemented method for exchanging certain profile information over a network. According to claim 1, a requesting user desires to exchange profile information with a registered user. The registered user is informed that the requesting user has requested to exchange profile information. Then, the method receives instructions from the registered user on "whether to permit the exchange of profile information with the requesting user" (claim 1, line 10). Then, the profile information can be exchanged between the requesting user and the registered user in accordance with the instructions that have been received from the registered user.

More particularly, among other things, claim 1 recites "receiving instructions from the identified registered user via the network on whether to permit the exchange of profile information with the requesting user" (claim 1, lines 9-10). The Examiner appears to reference FIG. 9 and col. 9, lines 25-48 of Nielsen as providing a relevant teaching of this element of claim 1. Applicant respectfully disagrees. FIG. 9 and col. 9,

lines 25-48 (which pertain to FIG. 9) of Nielsen merely explain steps taken to implement a consultant's response script, which processes responses from a consultant's personal webpage. The responses from the consultant's personal web page can be categorized into three different types of operation. A first type of operation determines whether the response is a request to reserve a question so that the consultant can answer the question at a later time. The second type of operation is whether the response is a submission of an answer to a previously reserved question. The third type of operation determines whether the response is an exit request. Hence, FIG. 9 and col. 9, lines 25-48 of Nielsen fail to (among other things) teach or suggest "receiving instructions from the identified registered user via the network on whether to permit the exchange of profile information with the requesting user." In other words, Nielsen not only does not pertain to the exchange of profile information, but also does not make any reference to receiving instructions on whether to permit an exchange of profile information with the requesting user. Accordingly, for at least the above-noted reasons, it is submitted that claim 1 is patentably distinct from Nielsen.

Claim 8 pertains to a computer-implemented method for exchanging electronic information in a controlled manner. The method operates in a network-based information exchange system. According to claim 8, a requestor designates a requested party with which an information exchange is desired. Then, the requestor requests an information exchange with the requested party. The method thereafter exchanges "electronic information between the requestor and the requested party over a network to the extent permitted by the requested party." Hence, claim 8 pertains to an exchange of information between a requested party and a requestor. According to claim 8, the requestor designates a particular requested party from which an information exchange is then requested. In contrast, Nielsen pertains to a system in which a human customer can send an information request (question) to a system. In other words, in Nielsen, the question is not sent to a specific consultant, but instead sent to the system which then determines which one or more consultants is qualified to provide an answer to the question. Hence, the system in Nielsen teaches against a requestor designating a requested party with which an information exchange is desired. Furthermore, Nielsen teaches against a requestor requesting an information exchange with the requested party that has been so designated. Accordingly, for at least the above-noted reasons, it submitted that claim 8 is patentably distinct from Nielsen.

Claim 16 pertains to a method for accessing a database of information across a network. The method, among other things, recites "receiving a request from a particular requesting user seeking to receive user information from the central system for a particular registered user" (claim 16, lines 4-5). As previously noted, Nielsen does not teach or suggest receiving a request that seeks to receive user information for a particular registered user. Indeed, in Nielsen, the information request which includes a question is intentionally not directed to any specific consultant, but instead to a server that later determines which one or more consultants are qualified to answer the question. Further, claim 16 recites, "determining whether the particular registered user agrees to release of the user information associated with a particular registered user" (claim 16, lines 6-7). Nielsen fails to teach or suggest any evaluation of whether a particular registered user agrees to release of the user information associated with the particular registered user. Accordingly, for at least the above-noted reasons, it is submitted that claim 16 is patentably distinct over Nielsen.

Claim 18 pertains to a system for managing the exchange of dynamic information pertaining to persons. The system includes at least a system server, a requestor's computer system, and a requestee's computer system. Among other things, claim 18 recites that "a requestee's computer ... receives a permission request from said server system to permit exchange of the profile information with the requestor, and sends a permission response to said server system indicating whether the requested exchange of profile information is permitted" (claim 18, lines 13-17). For similar reasons to those noted above, it is submitted that claim 18 is patentably distinct over Nielsen.

Claim 41 pertains to an information management and distribution system. Among other things, claim 41 recites "user modules that enable registered users to distribute their contact information to other registered users by way of said system server, the other registered users receive the contact information that has been distributed with said user modules, and in the case where the registered user is one of the employees of the business entity, the contact information that is distributed includes the corporate contact information. To the extent that Nielsen pertains to the distribution of information between users, it should be understood that the users involved are customers and consultants. In contrast, claim 41 pertains to registered users, business entities, and employees of the business entities. The registered users may be employees of the business entity. Hence, in the case in which contact information is to

be distributed from one registered user to another, if the registered user is an employee of one of the business entities, then the contact information that is distributed includes the corporate contact information for the business entity. Nielsen, however, does not pertain to a system that is able to store and distribute contact information for registered users and business entities that have employees. As such, Nielsen further does not teach or suggest "an administrator module that registers a business entity with said server system by providing the corporate contact information for the business entity, and said administrator module controls registration of the employees of the business entity" (claim 41, lines 5-7). Accordingly, for at least the above-noted reasons, it is submitted that claim 41 is patentably distinct over Nielsen.

Claim 43 pertains to an information management and exchange system having a plurality of registered users that each have their own profile information. Among other things, claim 43 recites acts which allow the registered users to be disabled. Among other things, claim 43 recites "disabling use of the profile information for the selected registered user by those of the registered users whom have previously received the profile information from the selected registered user." Nielsen lacks any teaching or suggestion for such a disabling act. Hence, for at least the above-noted reasons, it is submitted that claim 43 is patentably distinct from Nielsen.

Claim 45 pertains to a method for maintaining and distributing contact information for a business entity and employees of the business entity. As previously noted, Nielsen fails to teach or suggest a method that maintains and distributes contact information for not only a business entity but also its employees. Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 45 is patentably distinct from Nielsen.

Claim 19 pertains to a method for maintaining information pertaining to a plurality of registered users, such information being stored in a remote database. The method operates to update local databases of local machines associated with registered users that have previously stored pre-established information for particular registered users. In rejecting claim 19, the Examiner relies on Baker et al. Baker et al. does not pertain to pre-established information for particular registered users. Instead, Baker et al. pertains to regulating network database access by rating particular information and/or services to restrict specific system users from accessing the information/services via otherwise uncontrolled databases. A relational database is used and "arranged so that for each user of the system a request for a particular resource will only be passed on from the

local network to a server providing a link to the public/uncontrolled database if the resource identifier has an access rating for which the user has been assigned specific permissions by an administrator/manager." Baker et al., col. 3, lines 21-27. Hence, Baker et al. does not pertain to updating a remote database based on modifications to the pre-established information stored in a local database. Nor does Baker et al. provide any teaching or suggestion for "determining those of the registered users that have previously stored the pre-established information for the particular registered user in local databases of local computing devices associated with such registered users" (claim 19, lines 8-10). Hence, for at least the above-noted reasons, it is submitted that claim 19 is patentably distinct from Baker et al.

Based on the foregoing it is submitted that claims 1, 8, 16, 18, 19, 41, 43 and 45 are patentably distinct from Nielsen or Baker et al. In addition, it is submitted that dependent claims 2-7, 9-15, 17, 42, 44 and 46-54 are also patentably distinct for at least the same reasons. The additional limitations recited in the independent or the dependent claims are not further discussed as the above-discussed limitations are clearly sufficient to distinguish the claimed invention from Nielsen or Baker et al. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 1-19 and 41-54 under 35 USC §102(e).

SUMMARY

It is submitted that the patentability of the pending claims has been established. Therefore, it is submitted that all claims (namely, claims 1-19 and 41-54) are patentably distinct from the cited references. Reconsideration of the application and an early Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

If there are any issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Applicant hereby petitions for any extension of time which may be required to maintain the pendency of this case, and any required fee for such extension or any further fee required in connection with the filing of this Amendment is to be charged to Deposit Account No. 500388 (Order No. CTC1P001).

Respectfully submitted,

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